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SUBJECT: THE DEPUTY SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH EU HI-REP
SOLANA

Classified By: USEU acting POL MINS-COUNS O'Hara, reasons 1.4 b and d

11. (C) Summary: Deputy Secretary Armitage and EU Foreign Policy Hi-Rep Solana met June 2 and discussed the Mid-East Peace Process (MEPP), Iraq and the forthcoming US/EU Summit. Solana said the EU would be as supportive as possible regarding the new government in Iraq. He also emphasized the importance of getting a UNSC resolution on Iraq. On the Mid-East, Solana enthusiastically embraced the possibility of trying to move ahead on the Roadmap this year and said he would be available to do whatever he could in this area.. Solana Cabinet member Paul Riederman told us afterwards that Solana was very pleased with the meeting -- particularly with the discussion of the MEPP. End Summary

12. (U) Deputy Secretary Armitage and EU Foreign Policy Hi-Rep Solana met for 45 minutes June 2 in Brussels in Solana's office. Afterwards, Deputy Secretary Armitage and Solana held a joint 10 minute press conference at the EU. Attending the meeting were USEU Ambassador Schnabel, D Special Assistant John Gastright, USEU Acting Minister-Counselor Harry O'Hara (notetaker), and USEU AID Counselor Pat Lerner; on the EU side were Council North America Office head Jim Cloos, Council European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) Deputy Claude-France Arnoult, Council Deputy Cabinet Head Pedro Serrano, and Council Cabinet Advisor Paul Reiderman.

IRAQ AND NEXT EC PRESIDENT

13. (C) Deputy Secretary Armitage thanked Solana for his June 1 remarks expressing support for the creation of a new government in Iraq, then updated Solana on the interim Iraqi government, Brahimi's efforts, and US efforts to ensure the passage of a UNSC resolution for Iraq. Solana asked how a deadline for a US/MNF troop withdrawal from Iraq would be handled. The Deputy Secretary noted that while a 12-month review would be automatic, the new government could ask for an earlier withdrawal.

SOLANA/IRAQ: INCREASING LEGITIMACY OF NEW GOVERNMENT

14. (C) Solana said that, much would depend on the quality of the people in the new government in Iraq. He opined that many in Iraq seem to view their new government as a rotation of chairs. Solana said the new leaders would nonetheless face the challenge of earning legitimacy in the street and stressed that the EU wanted to help counter the perception among many Iraqis that "nothing has changed," and noted that an Iraqi constitution, which comes later, will be a tricky but necessary part of the legitimization process. Deputy Secretary Armitage observed that getting more Iraqi faces on

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Iraqi television -- and less American faces -- would help with the image of the new government.

SOLANA'S "STATEMENT"

15. (C) Solana told the Deputy Secretary that he wanted to make a "statement on Iraq." He said that the EU will be as supportive as possible with the new government; passage of an UNSC resolution is important; the EU wants success. He also stressed that the current atmosphere (between the US and the EU) is good and that we've passed a hurdle (from last year, when transatlantic tensions were higher).
SOLANA'S THOUGHT-EXPERIMENTS ON IRAQ

16. (C) To the discomfort -- but not surprise -- of some of his staff, Solana strayed from his brief and speculated about how, if he was Prime Minister of Iraq, he would look at the 200,000 Iraqis that entered the Iraqi armed forces from 1993-2003, and try to rehabilitate them back into the Iraqi military. He said that such an approach could help rebuild an Iraqi army that could take on visible security tasks. Deputy Secretary Armitage noted the importance of rebuilding the

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Iraqi military but he added that rebuilding the Iraqi police is even more pressing due to the need for "law and order" as a top issue for a majority of Iraqis today.

17. (C) Switching gears, Solana wondered if, as a result of changes in Iraq and Turkey, the Turkish/Israeli "strategic"

partnership was in danger. Thinking out loud, he said that an informal Israel-Turkey-Kurdish "triangle" is not functioning. On Turkey, Solana noted that the EU will have important decisions to make on Turkey and that Turkish/EU relations are going to have to change. Solana's staff told us afterwards that these remarks were unscripted but reflected Solana's concerns that the special Turkish-Israeli relationship is weakening, and that Turkey is increasingly uncomfortable with what Solana views as Israel's influence with Kurds in Iraq.

MEPP/ROADMAP/QUARTET

18. (C) The Deputy noted that the May 4 Quartet talks had gone well. Solana stressed the EU commitment to the roadmap and reported that EU special Mid-East envoy Marc Otte was in Cairo (June 2) and would meet with President Mubarak. Restating previous EU markers, Solana said that for full EU engagement, we need to see full Israeli withdrawal per the roadmap. Solana expressed worry that the process could freeze and that bigger problems would emerge in 2005. He asked the Deputy "how much energy can the US put into this during (U.S. Presidential) elections?" Deputy Secretary Armitage replied that the US does not want to wait until after November and that the Administration is eager to move the process forward if the Palestinian Authority can get approval from Arafat and Sharon can prevail on the Gaza withdrawal. Solana warmly welcomed this and said that as fast the US goes, the EU will go faster. Solana has been talking to Mubarak, and the Egyptians are also ready to go. Solana suggested the need to get the Quartet "on the ground" with people in the region. He argued that this would strengthen the ability of Jordan and Egypt to play a positive role. Solana continued with the need to get momentum going and stated that he, Solana, is ready to work this full-time, "24/7."

US/EU SUMMIT REVIEW

19. (C) In response to the Deputy Secretary's request for an EU assessment of where we are concerning US/EU Summit preparations, Cloos acknowledged that the air agreement will not be ready for the Summit but said that even if the US and EU cannot have an air agreement deliverable for the Summit, perhaps we might find a way to say that we've made progress. Cloos stressed how important Galileo is for the Summit and noted how pleased he was that Galileo is just about settled. Solana said that the US and the EU still have time to work out a Broader Middle East and Northern Africa (BMENA) statement. He noted EU concerns about having the US/EU or any other outside structure "grading" the affected countries in the region. He also reiterated an ongoing EU concern that their Euro-Med/Barcelona process agreements not be diluted at the G-8 or at the Summit. He said that the EU's concerns in the region were not just strategic but were also based on Europe's close proximity to the BMENA. He said that this neighborhood concern needed to be accommodated. For Solana, the terrorism declaration is going well and Washington had given the EU's new counter-terrorism coordinator, Gijs de Vries, a good and successful visit.

SUDAN/DARFUR

10. (C) The Deputy Secretary reviewed US concerns about the difficult situation in Sudan, particularly Darfur, where the US is pressing to ensure that humanitarian supplies get to people in need. The Deputy said that the US needs to push the Sudanese Government to allow this to happen. Solana said that the EU may want to do something in the Sudan and is considering sending in a team to look at the situation on the ground. Without being more specific, Solana said that the EU would also want to engage.

11. (U) Deputy Secretary Armitage has cleared this message.

Schnabel